

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 6 with the following amended paragraph:

The conjugate is the reaction product of the above-described intermediate which has the general formula $\text{P-O-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-SO}_2\text{-(CH=CH}_2\text{)}_n\text{P-(O-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-SO}_2\text{-CH=CH}_2\text{)}_n$, wherein n is an integer and is at least 1, P represents a hydrophilic biopolymer, and in a preferred embodiment, the biopolymer (P) is a hyaluronan or a hylan and a biologically active material capable of being covalently and nucleophilically bonded to said intermediate. The intermediate may also contain, in addition to the free, or reactive vinyl groups, some extent of DVS cross-linking.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 14 with the following amended paragraph:

The intermediate has the general formula $\text{P-O-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-SO}_2\text{-(CH=CH}_2\text{)}_n\text{P-(O-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-SO}_2\text{-CH=CH}_2\text{)}_n$, wherein n is an integer and is at least 1, P represents a hydrophilic biopolymer having a functional groups capable of reacting with divinyl sulfone.